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Biola Hour Highlights

**JAMES
PART II**



JAMES PART II

By
LEHMAN STRAUSS, LITT.D., F.R.G.S.

Part II is a portion of the book by
Lehman Strauss entitled, *James Your
Brother: Studies in the Epistle of James*.
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SIN THROUGH LUST AND LURE

James 1:13, 14

13. Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man:

14. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.

These two verses take up an important theological question: namely, the origin of sin with the human race. James commences with the emphatic admonition that no man is ever to blame God when he is tempted to do wrong. If he should ever entertain such a thought, let him never say it. The tempting here, unlike that in verse 2, speaks of the solicitation of man to do evil. Now there have been those religious leaders who reasoned that since God permitted man to be in such a circumstance where he was exposed to temptation to do wrong, God was the author of the sin to which those circumstances had led. James warns us never to say such a thing.

Doing the very thing that we are warned here not to do is common among us all. For example, we excuse our wrongdoing on the ground of some inheritance or environment which we reason to be related to the providence of God, which we therefore conclude must of necessity come from God. It was this very reasoning to which our first parents resorted after the fall and it comes only from an unregenerate or carnal mind. Adam sought to excuse himself when he said to God: "The woman whom Thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat" (Gen. 3:12). Did not God give him the woman who gave him the forbidden fruit? In its finality he was blaming God for his sin.

The one restriction that God had placed upon our first parents was reasonable, being a test of their faith and obedience, not a temptation to do wrong. The power of choice lay with them, and they had as much power to choose the good as they had to choose the evil. God did not compel Adam and Eve to eat the fruit; He forbade them, and yet Adam sought to blame the Lord.

A look at the Scriptures and then at the world shows us that man is not what his Creator intended him to be. Man is far from what he was when he came from the hands of his Creator. Are we to assume then that man sinned because he was made of defective material? No, never! "God created man in His own image . . . and God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:27, 31). Adam was created

a righteous and holy being and placed in a perfect environment entirely suited to his nature, so that he could not blame God for defection in himself or in his environment.

"God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man." It is unreasonable to conceive how any one who has not been first tempted himself by evil could tempt another to do evil. It would seem that a man who would shrink from the thought of God's doing evil must shrink also from the thought of His tempting man to do evil. He who is in perfect righteousness and holiness cannot be the originator of sin. A tempter to sin must be himself open to sin's temptations. God cannot be thus tempted. No man is ever driven to sin by the circumstances in which God has placed him. The drunkard cannot blame his drunkenness on the associates who gave him his first drink. Let us never excuse our wrongdoing by blaming the providence of God. There is absolutely nothing in the divine nature that responds to evil. God is righteous, hence He leads only in paths of righteousness. (Psalm 23:3).

Our Lord Jesus Christ, the God-Man, proved He could not be tempted to do evil, and Satan calculated wrong when he figured that Jesus Christ the Man could be tempted to sin. Not one of Satan's offers appeals to our Lord Jesus Christ who "knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21); He was "without sin" (Heb. 4:15); "separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26); and "in Him is no sin" (1 John 3:5).

How then did sin enter the human race? James gives a reasonable and satisfying answer twofold in content. Temptation is both internal and external. Temptation may come from within when a man "*is drawn away of his own lust,*" and it may come from without when he is "*enticed.*" From within it is *lust*; without it is *lure*.

Temptation is traced first to our *lusts*, or *desires*. Where there is no desire there is no temptation. Not all persons have the same evil desires. An evil which may be desirable to one person may be repulsive to another. We are sometimes critical of others who have evil desires which may not bother us, forgetting that we have evil desires which may not appeal to them.

We do not always have an opportunity to fulfil our wrong desires; but when the opportunity does come, the real temptation comes also. God does not hold us chargeable when a desire to do wrong arises within, but we are answerable when that desire breaks through every barrier and takes advantage of the opportunity to sin.

Man's sinful, fallen nature is bent to do evil. We are shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin (Psalm 51:5). Thoughts and acts of sin spring from a principle or sin nature. The human heart is naturally deceitful and sick (Jer. 17:9), and out of it come forth evil thoughts (Matt. 15:19). A corrupt tree can only bring forth evil fruit (Matt. 7:17, 18). We all must agree with Paul where he says: "Sin . . . dwelleth in me" (Rom. 7:17). "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

How such an evil bent came to be is not our problem here. Frankly, its origin does not matter. All desire to do wrong grows out of a depravity within man. Sin is not eternal, but it originated in the human race in the free act of Adam. Through one sin of this one man, Adam, a sinful nature is imputed to all of Adam's posterity, since he is the federal head and representative of the human race. Every man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires.

James also deals with the external allurements to do wrong in this use of the words "and enticed." The flesh with its evil desires is the internal foe; Satan with his enticements is the external foe. The believer must be on guard at all times. A fifth column operates from within while the enemy solicits from without. Our Lord said to His own: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matt. 26:41).

Were it not for our desires within, Satan could never gain a victory over us by his enticements. Our Lord was enticed by Satan to sin, but Christ could not fall prey to Satan's enticements since He had no lust within. The Scripture says that He "was in all points tempted like as we are yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). This meant that He was tempted in all points like ourselves, apart from indwelling sin. He was solicited to sin by Satan and the Scribes and Pharisees, but He did not submit to speak or act wrongly, because He could not. He revolted against sin and rejected every offer to commit sin because there was nothing carnal in Him to respond to temptation. His temptations never sprang, as in our case, from any sinful desire on His part. The temptations, or enticements, from without left His sinless nature undisturbed and unscarred.

Satan can break through the defense of a fallen sinner, but he could break through our perfect Savior never. We are not suggesting that our Lord Jesus was able *not to sin*, but that He was *not able to sin*. There never was any inclination in Christ to do any of the wrong things He was tempted to do. It is the sinner, therefore, who needs the help.

Viewing the awful consequences of sin which James clearly states, and which we shall take up in our next study, we should come to our "great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God" (Heb. 4:14). He is able to sympathize. Mark well, He does not sympathize with our sins. We need never look to Him for sympathy if we yield to sin. True, Christ is our judicial advocate with the Father if we do sin (1 John 2:1), and "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). But having been attacked from without by Satan, and thus having passed through the path of temptation, He feels for us. The Scripture says He is "*touched*." What tenderness! What compassion! He knows what it means to be tempted. He understands the fierceness of Satan's attacks.

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Heb. 4:16). Are you being tempted from within or enticed from without? Come to the Saviour!

Confess all to Him now. As we watch and pray at the throne of grace we shall not yield to temptation. If you have yielded to temptation, you need mercy; if you confess your sin to Him, divine mercy will be extended to you. If you are being tempted, you need grace to resist evil, and as you come to Him grace will be extended to you. He hates the sin but loves the sinner. While there is still time, and before it is too late, "let us come."

DEATH THROUGH SIN

James 1:15-17

15. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.

16. Do not err, my beloved brethren.

17. Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning.

Having dealt with the causes of sin in verses 13 and 14, James continues with the all-important subject of the inevitable consequences of sin, namely, death. If we fail to come to God's throne of grace in the moment of temptation, but instead yield to some evil desire, "Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." And lest any one should minimize sin, as many do, the apostle wants all to know the progress of sin. He traces it quite simply: *lust—sin—death*.

Any act of sin, which is any transgression against the holiness and the laws of God, must run its natural course — it "bringeth forth death." The sin does not end with the speaking of an evil word or the committing of an evil deed. It must of necessity yield its inevitable fruit. So say the laws of God, and no man has ever dared to defy those laws and prove them inoperative. Death follows sin as naturally, and by as perpetual and permanent a law, as night follows day.

This law of death through sin was introduced by God to the first man of His creation. God said to Adam: "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Adam sinned in willful disobedience. At the moment of his sin spiritual death entered, and with it exemption from bodily death was forfeited also. Before the fall the human body was capable of immortality, but after Adam sinned it was impossible for him not to die. And since Adam was both the federal and organic representative of the human race, death of necessity fastened itself upon every one of his descendants. The fall had to be universal, extending to all of Adam's posterity (Rom. 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:21). The law cannot be broken; "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb. 9:27).

But how does death through sin apply to believers? James addressed himself primarily to Christians. The Bible, both Old and New Testaments,

contains a number of illustrations showing to us how sin brings death to the child of God. Now we are certain that there is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1); that is, no person who has been born again can suffer eternal separation from God in hell, which is the second death (Rev. 21:8). However, it is clear from several passages in the Bible that even Christians are punished with physical death because of willful sin. Such deaths are not accidental but divinely intentional. God has struck men dead who persisted in sinning against Him. He killed Nadab and Abihu when they offered strange fire before Him (Lev. 10:1, 2). He killed Ananias and Sapphira when they lied to Him (Acts 5:10). He kills Christians who persist in partaking of the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner (1 Cor. 11:30). The Apostle John warns the believer that "There is a sin unto death" (1 John 5:16).

Let not any one of us ever set himself as a judge in these matters by concluding that the early death of a Christian is the judgment of God for sin. God alone is the Judge and He only has full knowledge. But let the law of death through sin serve as a solemn warning to all who claim to be Christian. We ought never to tamper with any of God's laws, certainly not with the law which says that "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

Now we all know that sin has its pleasures. The writer to the Hebrews tells us that Moses acknowledged this, but Moses knew also the excitement and gratification which sinful indulgences afford are but "for a season" (Heb. 11:25). To those who live the longest, and enjoy the pleasures of sin to the fullest possible extent, death comes at last and cuts off all the streams of lustful pleasures.

Let a man weigh the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season, with an endless eternity of regret, remorse, and the bitter agonies of divine retribution, and he will make the wise choice to stand with Jesus Christ and the people of God. Before you sin, weigh the recompense of the reward for sin (Heb. 11:26).

Faith can be sure that God will recompense a fair reward commensurate with the reproach that a believer must suffer in this life, for it was by faith that Moses refused the pleasures of Egypt and chose rather to suffer affliction and reproach. Moses renounced those things for which the heart of the natural man craves, those things that are temporal, visible, and satisfying to the lusts of the flesh, and to them he never turned back because he beheld Him who is invisible. Just as sure as we are that sin pays its wages, so sure are we that God will reward those who turn from sin to Jesus Christ.

"Do not err, my beloved brethren." James adds here that we are to make no mistake about these things. There is a question as to whether this verse (16) goes with what precedes it or with the statement which follows. It could well apply to both. We are to make no mistake about the origin of sin (verses 13, 14) or the result of sin (verse 15). Rather we must be exceedingly cautious not to be deceived in these matters.

The sin question, with all of its many implications and ramifications, is

perhaps one about which more people are deceived than any other. Many persons have a false idea that they can cast all restraint to the winds and live as they please, expecting God in the end to show mercy. If this book is being read by any person with such ideas, let me pass on to you God's warning: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). "Do not err, my beloved brethren."

Verse 17 mentions another fact about which we are not to err, namely, God is the Author of all that is good. Solicitation to do wrong comes from men and Satan but never from God. He is not the source of our sins and sufferings. Behind every mercy and blessing stands God, the Giver of every good and perfect gift. He is a great Giver.

There is an interesting thought in the use of the word "gift" in this verse. In the Greek these words are not the same. The first word for gift is "*dosis*" and is translated "act of giving." The second usage of the word is "*dorema*," and is translated as the noun "gift." The thought here is rich and beautiful. Both the act of giving and the gift are good. The act of giving would seem to include both the motive and the measure. When God gives, He has no ulterior motive such as giving to receive again. I am not too sure that the motive for our giving gifts at Christmas time is always good. How often have we scurried about at the last minute for a gift for someone only because we received an unexpected gift from that person! How many names have we added to our Christmas card mailing list of those persons who have sent us cards! When God gives, it is "liberally" (1:5), and that with no thought of receiving anything in return. He gave *first* out of love for man (John 3:16). His daily benefits, like food, clothing, shelter, strength of body, soundness of mind, and mercies too numerous to mention here come from His bountiful heart and hand.

The Apostle Paul wrote: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). Yes, our heavenly Father has given to us *all* things — His Son, His Spirit, His Word, and His very own life. Every day should be a day of thanksgiving for the child of God.

We have never been charged for one single mercy of blessing, nor have we merited one. James tells us that all blessings come "from above." The expression "from above" is found many times throughout the Scriptures. Our Lord used it when He spoke to Nicodemus about the new birth. He said: "Except a man be born *from above*" (John 3:3). The word is *anōthen* translated "from above." The new birth is not of this earth, but from another world, from above, even from the heart of God. Our heavenly Father is the source of every good thing.

Here God is called "*the Father of lights*." I take it that this refers to the great luminaries, the sun, the moon, and the stars. Some of these magnificent heavenly bodies are essential to man's existence, while others may only add to the beauty of God's universe. He has created them all for our blessing, and they are among His "perfect" gifts. With Him there is no

“variableness,” that is, no changeableness. God is not capricious and changeable like man. We are vacillating, variable, veering — but God is not. For God’s unchangeableness we should be thankful every day of our lives. Praise the Lord for His consistency and constancy. With the Father of Lights there is no variableness.

James adds, “. . . neither shadow of turning.” The American Standard Version, and other versions, translate this expression “neither shadow that is cast by turning.” We have observed an eclipse of the sun as it has been obscured by the moon. This is a shadow caused by turning.

God is the Author of light, and with Him is no darkness at all, not so much as a shadow. The dark shadows that bring their gloom and sadness to the human heart come from an earthly source. When we allow anything to come between God and us, we must walk in the shadows without the light of His countenance. But He has not changed. He does not cast the shadows. If there are shadows without the Light, it is because we have turned our faces from Him, thereby causing them ourselves. Let us behold Him daily in the beauty of holiness that we may experience the light of His presence and reflect that Light to others.

LIFE THROUGH THE WORD

James 1:18-20

18. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.

19. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

20. For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

The subject before us is one of the most blessed in Chapter One. This truth, namely, Regeneration, the imparting of divine life through the Word, is one of unspeakable importance. Actually this is the Bible’s major message. The salvation of man is that purpose for which Christ came. He said as much in Luke 19:10. This is a vast subject and understandable only through its several aspects: Regeneration, Redemption, Justification, Sanctification, Repentance, Faith.

In verse 18 James takes up the subject of Regeneration. The word *regeneration* appears but two times in the Bible. (Matt. 19:28; Titus 3:5, 6). In the passage in Matthew it means “a new order,” referring to the millennium, Christ’s kingdom on earth. In Titus Paul uses the word in reference to the spiritual aspect of the kingdom. It is the “new order,” the “new creation,” into which God places the believing sinner the moment he believes.

Regeneration may be defined as an act of God whereby He bestows upon the believing sinner new life. This life is God’s own life. God Himself is the Bestower, the believer is but the recipient. Our Lord said it is

impossible for a man to enter into the kingdom of God (the new order) except he be born again. Being "born again" (John 3:3), "born . . . of God" (John 1:13), "Born . . . of the Spirit" (John 3:5) are expressions synonymous with being *regenerated*.

In speaking of the believer's new life in Christ, James writes: "*Of His own will begat He us.*" This new life has its origin with God. He begat us. It is one of the perfect gifts from above of verse 17. If God did not will to save us, we could not possibly be saved. "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). He "is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

God wants all men everywhere to be saved. He always has said to man, "I will"; but the sinner does not receive God's life until he too replies, "I will." God is saying, "I will if you will." This is the essential factor in the marriage ceremony. The marriage is not recognized until both the man and the woman say "I will." When Christ gave Himself for the Church (Eph. 5:25), He manifested the love of God, and that was the "I will" of God, without which man's "I will" would be useless. But oh, blessed truth that God said "I will" in the long ago!

James reminds us that it was first of "His [God's] own will" that a man is born from above. That God, of His own free will, should choose us to be heirs of eternal salvation through faith in His Son is the greatest marvel of all times. Eternal salvation is the apex of giving. God fashioned and finished redemption by His own will. We are born again, begotten, brought forth from the dead, not "of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:13).

The Revised Version translates the words "begat He us" to read, "brought us forth." The construction of the Greek is participial, and reads: "Willing He brought us forth." Induced by no other reason, God willingly brought us forth out of death into life (John 5:24). In verse 15 James uses the term "bringeth forth." The lust and sin are seen bringing "forth death"; here God, through His Work, begets life.

The Apostle is careful to mention next the *instrument* of Regeneration: "*the Word of truth.*" The "Word of truth" is the whole system of Christian truth found within the confines of the Bible. It is the Word of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Plumptre writes: "It is something more than the written Word of the Old Testament Scriptures, or even the spoken word of preachers. It is the whole message from God to man, of which the written or spoken word is but one of the channels, and which to those who receive it rightly is the beginning of a higher life."

We cannot say too much about the necessity of the preeminence of God's Word in the Christian ministry. The use of "Christian films" and "gospel magic" may have a place in some phase of Christian activity, but they are a poor substitute for the teaching and preaching of God's Word. "For the *Word of God* is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit,

and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Heb. 4:12).

The Word of God includes the whole of God's verbal communications to man, and I believe this to be the idea that James attaches to the phrase. God's Word is "quick": that is, living, active, not a dead letter but a living and life-giving spirit. Proclaim it with accuracy and clarity and in the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is certain to work in all who believe (1 Thess. 2:13).

There is a principle, or call it law, which says that all good seed brought in contact with moist earth will produce and develop life. So with the good seed of the Word of God. In it there is a potency resident that, when received into the good ground of a believing heart, will produce and develop life (Mark 4:3, 14, 20). The Apostle Peter wrote: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever" (1 Peter 1:23). The Bible is doubtless the one instrument used to bring to pass the greatest revival and revolutionary movements for good in world history. James is but repeating the words of the Lord Jesus when he writes that we are brought forth (begotten) with the word of truth (John 5:24). Paul does likewise when he adds: "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God" (Rom. 10:17). Only living things can produce life.

Since the Bible is a living Book, it is likewise a life-giving Book. This is a mystery not easy to explain, just as there is mystery attached to life in general that the most clever biologist cannot explain; but we are certain that the Bible works. The writer, at the time of this writing, is in his sixteenth year as pastor in the same church. He has sought to preach and teach the Word of God faithfully and has seen it work miracles in the transformation of hundreds of lives. "So shall My Word be that goeth forth out of My mouth: it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isa. 55:11).

The Apostle includes God's purpose in regeneration: "*that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.*" To understand the meaning of this term, I suggest we look together at an Old Testament ceremony practiced by Israel. In connection with the Passover celebration, the Israelite presented to the Lord the firstfruits of the harvest. It was an act of consecration in which the offering of the part was a pledge of the whole. The worshiper was acknowledging that it all came from the Lord, hence all belonged to Him (Lev. 23:9-14). Just as soon as Israel arrived in the land flowing with milk and honey and gathered the first harvest, God was to have His portion first (Lev. 23:14; Deut. 26:1, 2). The land did not belong to them. It was God's possession and they were holding it in trust for Him. The believer is to recognize the principle of divine ownership in everything he possesses.

Now when a believing sinner is regenerated he is not his own. Having been bought with a price he becomes the purchased possession of the One who redeemed him (1 Cor. 6:19, 20). When God saves a man, giving him a new life, that life is God's possession, and the Christian is merely holding it in trust for its Owner.

We must recognize the principle of divine ownership in all that we possess. All that we are and have are God's. When I consecrate my first waking moments to God in the morning, it is but a symbol and earnest that all of my time is at His disposal. When I commence my day by giving to my Lord the first expressions of adoration and affection, it is but a symbol and pledge that He has first claim upon my heart at all times. When I bring to God the firstfruits of all money He entrusts to my care, it is a symbol and promise that all which remains is at His disposal. This is a true recognition of the fundamental principle: namely, "All things come of Thee, and of Thine own have we given Thee" (1 Chron. 29:14). After all, He regenerated us and we are a kind of firstfruits.

It is written of the redeemed: "These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4). Of Old Testament saints we read: "Israel was holiness unto the Lord, and the firstfruits of His increase" (Jer. 2:3). May it ever be so of us!

"Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19). At first glance it might seem that this verse introduces a sharp change of thought, yet it is not so sharp a change when examined more closely. It begins with the word "wherefore." The use of "wherefore" usually refers to something that has gone before. James has just stated the power of the Word in regeneration. God brings us forth out of spiritual death into life by His Word. Now because of this, let the "beloved brethren . . . be swift to hear." The exhortation is to alertness and alacrity to receive the truth of the Word of God. Our Lord said: "The sower soweth the Word . . . He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mark 4:14, 9). (See also Revelation 2:7, 11, 29; 3:6, 13, 22.)

If the sinner wishes to have life, and the brethren wish to attain to the maturity of Christian manhood, "let every man be swift to hear." I fear that our times have produced a pace so fast and a multiplicity of attractions so appealing that men are not ready and eager to avail themselves of the many opportunities of increasing their acquaintance with the "Word of truth." The spoken and the written Word of God is available to every one of us. There are many cheap and trifling things in current conversation, newspapers, magazines, on television and radio in which we act wisely when we are *slow* to hear, but we need to be eager listeners and learners of those things that God would say to us.

Could it be that we are not more "swift to hear" because we are not "slow to speak"? God gave us two ears and only one mouth. Should we not be twice as swift to listen and learn? A wise man will listen to others and answer only if he is certain he has something worthwhile to say.

Some of us are blighted with the craving to be incessantly chattering. A proverb says "In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise" (Prov. 10:19). To refrain the lips is not always easy, but it is the better part of true wisdom. A tongue that is not still lacks the control of the discerning. A wise man is of a quiet spirit. "He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excel-

lent spirit. Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding" (Prov. 17:27, 28). The Christian who is well taught in the "Word of truth" is slow to speak, for he knows that "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned" (Matt. 12:36, 37).

The foregoing reference does not suggest that a man is justified on the ground of a good confession of words. Salvation is by grace through faith, and not through works or words of any description. But let all believers bear in mind at all times that we must all appear before the Judgement Seat of Christ to give an account of deeds done in the body (2 Cor. 5:10). The Christian, living according to the Word of God, will not utter useless, barren words.

"Wherefore . . . let every man be . . . *slow to wrath*." From both personal experience and observation I think I know why James might have linked the two expressions "slow to speak, slow to wrath." We all are acquainted with the fact that words unfitly spoken often cause an outburst of temper. What starts out as a sincere and friendly discussion sometimes leads to an argument, with its resulting flare of anger. Among those things for which the Christian should seek wisdom (1:5), there is the ever-present need for a controlled tongue and a controlled temper. When we are "swift to hear" the Word of truth, we will be slow to become angry. The same Word which is able to save the sinner is likewise able to sanctify the saint (John 17:17). The hearer and doer of God's Word will practice self-control at all times.

The Scriptures never speak against a child of God's becoming righteously angry at sin. Contrariwise, the Bible says: "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil" (Psalm 97:10). One of the deficiencies among believers is the lack of concern and the loss of capacity to be aroused over evil. There is an anger which is not sin. It is stated by Paul where he writes: "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:26, 27). The indication here is that a believer can be angry apart from sinning. If I am angry at nothing but sin, I can be angry so as not to sin.

Now we must beware lest we excuse sheer temper by calling it righteous indignation. If a violent passion is aroused in my mind, accompanied by the desire to take vengeance or to obtain satisfaction from one who has offended me, and that passion is accompanied by a hidden malice or smouldering resentment in my heart, I have sinned. But there is that unhappy aftermath which always comes to those who are guilty of this sin: "A man of great wrath shall suffer punishment" (Prov. 19:19). One of the firstfruits of every newborn child of God is the subduing of every evil passion. Yet we have met not a few Christians who seem to be weak at this point. Anger and a bad temper cling to them.

Lest any reader treat lightly of this matter, let me illustrate further. As I write these lines there comes to mind an incident which occurred only

recently. A young married man came to the study requesting membership in our assembly, but he felt that in all honesty I should know that he had been released recently from prison, having served two years for the crime of involuntary manslaughter. One day while at his work the foreman of his department issued an order of which my friend disapproved. An argument followed, words became heated, tempers flared, and fists flew. In the fracas the foreman was knocked to the floor, his head striking a sharp object, causing his death. The Christian man was tried in a court of law, found guilty, and sentenced to from two to twelve years in prison. After serving two years he was released for good behavior, but must remain on parole for ten years. He now has gotten victory over the sin of wrath, but at what a price! God had to put him in a prison cell for two years to teach him a lesson he might have learned more easily. Many murders proceed from wrath.

The Bible condemns sinful anger. Our Lord said: "Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment" (Matt. 5:22). The application of this verse for us is a warning against unwarranted anger with a fellow Christian which issues from pride and which desires the injury of the one against whom the anger is aimed. When Jesus went into the temple and beheld the money changers, He was angry with an anger that scorched and blistered; but His was not a selfish and vindictive anger expressed with contempt. The true children of God's kingdom are partakers of the divine nature, having been made righteous. They therefore love the brethren.

The Apostle Paul includes wrath as one of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:20) and therefore must be "put away" (Eph. 4:31). There ought never to be any passionate outburst of anger or hostile feeling coming from a child of God. We must pray daily that God might set a guard at the door of our lips so that we might be slow to speak and slow to wrath. Remember, "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Prov. 15:1).

The Apostle now gives a reason why the believer must be slow to wrath. "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (James 1:20). The righteousness which God requires, that is, the righteous character of God that every man must behold in the children of God, is obscured when we become angry. Anger does not help the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Lord once said to His disciples: "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2). Here Christ is predicting that religious Jews will angrily persecute His followers, going as far as to murder them, feeling they were doing God service by their deeds of violence. Saul of Tarsus so persecuted Christians because he believed them heretical (Acts 8:1). These things he regretfully testified to later (Acts 26:9, 10). After Paul's conversion a fanatical and bloodthirsty band of more than forty conspired to kill him (Acts 23:12, 13). But such a display of man's wrath never shows forth the righteousness of God. When a man is unrighteously

angry, it is not possible for him to speak and act righteously. An angry person is not fully rational and therefore says and does things he would never do in a quiet and thoughtful moment.

The anger of those Jews of whom our Lord spoke in John 16:2 prevails in those who hear God's Word but refuse to surrender to it. Their wrath was kindled because the disciples of Christ preached His Deity and Messiahship, which they rejected. How like some who attend our churches today and get angry when the plain truth of the Scriptures is taught! Cain rejected God's demand for a blood sacrifice; and when God rejected his offering, Cain in anger killed his brother (Gen. 4: 1-8). Men get angry today when they hear the minister of God's Word say that there cannot possibly be salvation apart from the sacrificial death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Actually all such do not get angry with man but with God Himself. Such anger does no one good. It does only eternal hurt.

Even Christians become angry when the preaching of God's Truth convicts them of some wrongdoing. I recall such anger early in my own Christian experience. I had joined a lodge where its members were made to swear to a secret oath. At that time I knew nothing of what the Bible taught about a child of God's becoming a member of a secret society. Then one day Evangelist Anthony Zeoli came to our community to conduct a series of preaching services. In a part of one message on the separation of Christians, he quoted more than a score of Bible references condemning such practices among believers. That night I became so angry I thought to myself I would never attend church again. But that message was just what I needed, and sometime during the ensuing year the Spirit of God convicted me greatly, and I then and there decided that I must withdraw from that secret society inasmuch as the Word of God condemned such affiliations for Christians.

It is God's design to produce practical righteousness in each of His children, but this can never be accomplished where anger is permitted to lay smoldering in the heart. The true Christian will be swift to listen to and learn the Word of Truth, and this in turn will crowd out the sin of anger. Does God see in each of us that holy character for which He longs? Let us remember at all times that wrath in a servant of Jesus Christ is a misrepresentation of His saving Gospel and is therefore out of place.



RADIO LOG

ALABAMA

Decatur (91.7)	WBQM-FM	8:30 AM	Sun
Decatur	WBQM-FM	9:30 PM	Sun.
Huntsville (94.5)	WNDA-FM	1:30 PM	Sun.
Huntsville	WNDA-FM	1:00 PM	Sun.

ARIZONA

Phoenix (1280)	KHEP	3:00 PM	Sun.
Phoenix	KHEP	9:00 AM	M-F

CALIFORNIA

Alturas (570)	KCNO	9:10 AM	M-F
Bakersfield (1050)	KWSO	9:30 AM	M-F
Chico (930)	KEWQ	8:00 AM	M-F
Corona (1370)	KREL	1:30 PM	M-F
Delano (98.5)	KDNO-FM	8:30 AM	Sun.
Dinuba (1130)	KRDU	8:30 AM	M-F
Dinuba	KRDU	8:30 PM	M-F
Dinuba	KRDU	4:00 PM	Sun.
Lodi (1570)	KCVR	8:00 AM	M-F
Long Beach (1390)	KGER	11:00 AM	M-F
Long Beach	KGER	9:30 PM	M-F
Modesto (104.1)	KHOP-FM	9:00 AM	M-F
Morro Bay (1150)	KBAI	6:30 PM	M-F
Oxnard (98.3)	KDAR-FM	12:30 PM	M-F
Redding (540)	KVIP	10:30 AM	M-F
San Bernardino/ Riverside (95.1)	KQLH-FM	9:00 AM	M-F
San Diego (860)	XEMO	8:00 AM	M-F
San Francisco (1100)	KFAX	8:30 AM	M-F
Santa Cruz (1080)	KSCO	8:30 AM	Sun.

COLORADO

Denver (990)	KRKS	12:00 N	M-F
Denver (910)	KPOF	9:30 AM	Sat.
Pueblo (970)	KFEL	8:30 AM	M-W-F

FLORIDA

Boca Raton (99.9)	WWOG-FM	10:00 PM	Sun.
Bradenton (1420)	WBRD	8:00 AM	Sun.
Jacksonville (550)	WAYR	7:30 AM	Sun.
Jacksonville	WAYR	6:00 PM	Sun.
Jacksonville	WAYR	10:30 AM	M-F
Orlando (1480)	WVCF	8:30 AM	Sun.
Pensacola (83.3)	WPCS-FM	9:30 PM	Sun.
Sarasota (105.5)	WKZM-FM	1:30 PM	Sun.

GEORGIA

Atlanta (1420)	WAVO	10:00 AM	Sun.
Valdosta (101.1)	WAFT-FM	2:30 PM	Sun.

HAWAII

Honolulu (870)	KAIM	10:00 PM	Sun.
Honolulu (85.5)	KAIM-FM	10:00 PM	Sun.

IDAHO

Caldwell (910)	KBGN	8:30 AM	M-F
Caldwell (94.1)	KBGN-FM	8:30 AM	M-F

ILLINOIS

Carlville (91.1)	WIBI-FM	4:30 PM	Sun.
East Moline (960)	WDLN	7:15 PM	Sat.

INDIANA

Elkhart (104.7)	WXAX-FM	8:00 AM	Sun.
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IOWA

Boone (1260)	KFGQ	1:00 PM	Sun.
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KANSAS

Newton (950)	KJRG	9:00 AM	M-F
Newton	KJRG	7:30 AM	Sun.

KENTUCKY

Louisville (103.9)	WFIA-FM	7:30 AM	Sun.
Louisville	WFIA-FM	10:00 AM	Sat.

MARYLAND

Baltimore (95.1)	WRBS-FM	6:00 PM	Sun.
Cumberland (102.9)	WPVM-FM	9:00 AM	Sun.
Williamsport (90.5)	WCRH-FM	8:30 PM	M-F
Williamsport	WCRH-FM	8:00 AM	Sun.

MICHIGAN

Detroit (103.5)	WMUZ-FM	9:00 AM	Sun.
Detroit (1340)	WEXL	11:30 AM	Sat.
Kalamazoo (1420)	WKPR	12:30 PM	Sun.
Lapeer (1230)	WMPC	1:00 PM	Sun.
Lapeer	WMPC	9:30 AM	M-F

MISSISSIPPI

Columbia (1360)	WFFF	9:00 AM	Sun.
Columbia (96.7)	WFFF-FM	9:00 AM	Sun.
Jackson (96.3)	WJFR-FM	11:00 AM	Sat.
Pascagoula (104.9)	WCIS-FM	11:00 PM	Sat.

MISSOURI

Kansas City (1510)	KCCV	9:00 AM	M-F
Springfield (97.3)	KWFC-FM	11:00 AM	Sat.

NEBRASKA

Grand Island (95.7)	KROA-FM	8:00 AM	Sun.
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NEVADA

Henderson (95.5)	KILA-FM	6:30 AM	M-F
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NEW JERSEY

Rio Grande (102.3)	WRIO-FM	7:30 AM	Sun.
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Trenton (94.5)	WCHR-FM	8:00 PM	M-F
Zarephath (99.1)	WAWZ-FM	5:30 PM	Sun.

NEW YORK

Buffalo (99.5)	WDCX-FM	4:30 PM	Sun.
Syracuse (102.9)	WMHR-FM	7:30 PM	Tues.

NORTH CAROLINA

Ashville (106.9)	WMIT-FM	2:30 PM	Sun.
Black Mountain (1010)	WFGW	2:30 PM	Sun.

High Point (95.5)	WHPE-FM	7:00 PM	Sat.
High Point	WHPE-FM	10:00 AM	Sun.

Winston/Salem (93.1)	WSEZ-FM	7:30 AM	Sun.
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Winston/Salem	WSEZ-FM	8:00 AM	M-F
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OHIO

Cincinnati (93.3)	WAKW-FM	8:30 AM	Sun.
Cleveland (103.3)	WCRF-FM	9:00 PM	Sun.

Dayton (90.3)	WCDR-FM	2:05 PM	Sun.
Miamisburg (93.7)	WFCJ-FM	9:30 PM	M-F

OKLAHOMA

Oklahoma City (800)	KQCV	8:00 AM	M-F
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Tulsa (98.5)	KCFO-FM	9:00 AM	M-F
Tulsa	KCFO-FM	8:30 PM	M-F

OREGON

Albany (790)	KWIL	8:00 AM	M-F
Albany	KWIL	3:00 AM	M-F

Ashland (1350)	KDOV	1:00 PM	M-F
Portland (93.7)	KPDQ-FM	9:00 AM	M-F

PANAMA

Panama City (1360)	H0X0	8:30 AM	M-F
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PENNSYLVANIA

Boyertown (107.5)	WBYO-FM	2:00 PM	Sun.
Danville (1570)	WPGM	9:00 AM	Sun.

Danville (86.7)	WPGM-FM	9:00 AM	Sun.
Greencastle (94.3)	WKSL-FM	8:00 AM	Sun.

Lancaster (94.5)	WDAC-FM	1:00 PM	Sun.
Lancaster	WDAC-FM	4:00 PM	Sat.

Lewistown (1490)	WMRF	8:30 AM	Sun.
Lewistown (95.5)	WMRF-FM	8:30 AM	Sun.

Martinsburg (1110)	WJSM	3:00 PM	Sun.
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Martinsburg (92.7)	WJSM-FM	8:30 PM	Sun.
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Montrose (96.5)	WPEL-FM	8:30 PM	Sun.
Philadelphia (740)	WVCH	11:30 AM	Sat.

Philadelphia (94.5)	WCHR-FM	8:00 PM	M-F
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Philipsburg (1260)	WPHB	3:00 PM	M-F
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Red Lion (96.1)	WGCB-FM	7:30 AM	Sun.
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TENNESSEE

Chattanooga (89.1)	WDYN-FM	8:00 AM	Sun.
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Chattanooga (88.9)	WMBW-FM	3:00 PM	Sun.
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Chattanooga	WMBW-FM	11:30 AM	Tues.
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TEXAS

San Antonio (1110)	KDRY	9:15 AM	Sun.
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VIRGINIA

Norfolk (99.7)	WYFI-FM	10:00 AM	Sun.
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WASHINGTON

Blaine/ (550)	KARI	11:30 AM	M-F
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Vancouver, B.C.			
Seattle (630)	KGDN	8:30 AM	Sat.

Seattle	KGDN	11:30 AM	M/F
Spokane (1280)	KUDY	11:30 AM	M/F

Walla Walla (1490)	KTEL	8:00 AM	M-W-F
Yakima (1390)	KBBO	9:30 AM	M/F

WEST VIRGINIA

Beckley (99.5)	WBKW-FM	8:00 AM	Sun.
Charleston (1410)	WSCW	10:00 AM	Sat.

Charleston	WSCW	9:30 AM	Sun.
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